

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 COME-00 OES-07 AID-05 TRSE-00
OMB-01 ACDA-12 IO-13 /117 W
-----126760 121005Z /23

R 120832Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 252
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, ETRD, VM, RP
SUBJECT: SRV AND GOP SIGN ECONOMIC TREATIES AND PLEDGE TO ESCHEW
FORCE

1. SUMMARY: SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) FOREIGN
MINISTER AND HIS 21-MEMBER PARTY CALLED AT MANILA JANUARY 6-9.
THE VISIT PRODUCED TRADE AND ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
COOPERATION TREATIES AS WELL AS A PLEDGE BY THE SRV AND THE
PHILIPPINES TO SETTLE ANY DISPUTES AMICABLY. AT A PRESS
CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE VISIT, THE DELEGATION'S SPOKESMAN
CLAIMED THE SRV AND GOP HELD IDENTICAL VIEWS REGARDING THE
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CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. THE SPOKESMAN NOTED RECENT
CHANGES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND WELCOMED REGIONAL COOPERATION.
HE SPECIFIED, HOWEVER, THAT ASEAN IS NOT A SUITABLE
VEHICLE FOR THIS INCREASED COOPERATION AND CALLED FOR
"NEW FORMS" CONSISTENT WITH THE "NEW SPIRIT" EXTANT IN
THE REGION. HE EXPRESSED GRATUITOUS SUPPORT FOR THE
PHILIPPINES VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. IN THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS.

THE VISIT, AT THE INVITATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, APPEARS TO BE PART OF THE GOP'S GENERAL EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THE PHILIPPINES STILL VIEWS THE SRV WITH CAUTION GIVEN THEIR COMPETITION OVER THE SPRATLEY ISLANDS AND THE LARGE STORE OF WEAPONS IN HANOI'S ARSENAL.
END SUMMARY.

2. THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN DUY TRINH AND HIS 21-MEMBER DELEGATION TOURING SOUTHEAST ASIA (SEA) CALLED AT MANILA JANUARY 6-9. THE VISIT, AT THE INVITATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES (GOP), PRODUCED AGREEMENTS ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AS WELL AS A PLEDGE BY BOTH THE SRV AND THE GOP TO SETTLE AMICABLY ANY DISAGREEMENTS WHICH MIGHT ARISE BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS. THE TRADE AGREEMENT LISTED COMMODITIES WHICH EACH NATION IS WILLING TO TRADE: FOR THE PHILIPPINES THIS INCLUDES COCONUT OIL AND PRODUCTS, TOBACCO, SOME CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT WHILE THE SRV INDICATED IT WILL BE WILLING TO EXPORT COAL, SUPER PHOSPHATE, CHEMICALS, PHARMACEUTICALS, MACHINE TOOLS AND SMALL MOTORS AMONG OTHER PRODUCTS. THE AGREEMENT SPECIFIES THAT TRADE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL BE AT PREVAILING WORLD PRICES AND ON THE BASIS OF MOST FAVORED NATION STATUS. THE SECOND AGREEMENT APPEARS TO COVER COOPERATION IN THE AREAS OF FISH PRODUCTION, COPPER AND FORESTRY DEVELOPMENTS
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AS WELL AS RICE AND SUGAR PRODUCTION.

3. THE AGREEMENT TO ATTEMPT TO SETTLE ANY DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS WAS CONTAINED IN A STATEMENT REPORTEDLY SIGNED BY NGUYEN DUY TRINH AND PRESIDENT MARCOS FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING JANUARY 7. THE TWO REPORTEDLY AGREED THAT /SHOULD THERE BE ANY DIFFERENCES OR DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES...BOTH COUNTRIES SHALL BE READY TO DISCUSS AND SETTLE THEM IN THE SPIRIT OF CONCILIATION AND FRIENDSHIP." MANILA'S NEWSPAPERS HAVE SPECULATED THAT THE AGREEMENT WAS AIMED AT POSSIBLE CONFLICT OVER THE SPRATLY ISLANDS WHICH THE GOP AND SRV ALONG WITH THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA CLAIM.

4. THE VISIT ENDED WITH A COMMUNIQUE WHICH ASSERTED THAT THE TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE CONDUCTED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF "CORDIALITY AND FRANKNESS." THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO NOTED THAT BOTH MRS. MARCOS AND FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO HAD ACCEPTED INVITATIONS TO VISIT VIETNAM, THAT THE QUESTION OF OVERFLIGHTS OF VIETNAM WAS DISCUSSED AND WILL BE EXPLORED FURTHER AT A LATER DATE AND THAT THE GOP WILL

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OMB-01 ACDA-12 IO-13 /117 W
-----126846 121005Z /11

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EXTEND ASSISTANCE TO THE SRV IN THE FORM OF A SEED
TESTING LABORATORY, SEEDS, AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES
AND EQUIPMENT.

5. BEFORE ENPLANING VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
VO DONG GHIANG HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE
DISCUSSED THE VISIT AND THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SEA.
GHIANG STATED THE GOP AND SRV HOLD "IDENTICAL VIEWS IN
ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AT PRESENT,
PARTICULARLY THE SITUATION IN OUR REGION." HE DESCRIBED
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SRV AND GOP AS "DEVELOPING FINELY"
AND "SOLEMNLY REITERATED" THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL
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SETTLE DISAGREEMENTS "IN A SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AND CONCILIATION." TURNING TO THE REGION, GHIANG CLAIMED THAT SEA HAS UNDERGONE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES OVER THE PAST DECADE -- MOST IMPORTANTLY THE "GREAT VICTORIES" OF THE VIETNAMESE, LAO AND CAMBODIAN PEOPLES -- AND THAT THE "TREND FOR PEACE, INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY IS BECOMING A MAJOR TREND IN THIS REGION." THIS NEW SITUATION "CALLS FOR COOPERATION IN THE REGION AND REGIONAL COOPERATION IS ONE OF THE THINGS WE ARE LONGING FOR" HE CONTINUED. WHILE NOT CRITICIZING ASEAN GHIANG OPINED THAT THIS REGIONAL COOPERATION "SHOULD BE BUILT ON A NEW BASIS, IN NEW FORMS AND IN KEEPING WITH THE NEW SITUATION. ASEAN HAS ITS HISTORY, HAS ITS ORIGIN. ...THESE FACTORS, THESE ELEMENTS, ARE STILL DIFFERENT FROM THE NEW SPIRIT, THE BEW BASIS AND FORMS WE ARE LONGING FOR."

6. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION CONCERNING THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF U.S. MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES, GHIANG REFERRED TO THE SECOND OF THE FOUR PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH SRV-GOP RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED IN JULY 1976. GHIANG STATED THAT POINT TWO PRESCRIBED THAT THE "TWO PARTIES WILL NOT ALLOW ANY FOREIGN POWER TO USE THEIR...TERRITORY AS A BASIS OF AGGRESSION AND INTERFERENCE...IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE OTHER PARTY OR IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION." THE SRV SUPPORTED THE "PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES IN DEMANDING THAT THE U.S. PULL OUT ITS MILITARY FORCES FROM PHILIPPINE TERRITORY. BUT WHILE THE PHILIPPINES HAS NOT REACHED THE OBJECTIVE OF ELIMINATING U.S. MILITARY BASES WE ARE CONVINCED...ZCE PHILIPPINES WILL ABIDE BY THESE FOUR PRINCIPLES."

6. COMMENT: TRADE BETWEEN THE SRV AND THE PHILIPPINES IS NOT VERY EXTENSIVE, TOTALING \$270,000 IN 1976, AND IT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNLIKELY THAT THE NEW AGREEMENTS WILL GREATLY ALTER ITS LEVEL. VIETNAM HAS LITTLE THAT THE PHILIPPINES NEEDS AND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE ABLE TO INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY ITS EXPORTS TO THE SRV. POLITICALLY, THE VISIT PRODUCED THE AGREEMENT ON THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF DISAGREEMENTS, WHICH THE GOP MAY HAVE FOUND OF SOME ASSURANCE. THE VISIT ALSO SERVED TO REINFORCE THE PHILIPPINES' CLAIM TO THIRD WORLD MEMBERSHIP. THE GO HAS BEEN MAKING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN ITS TIES WITH "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES; THIS VISIT APPEARS TO BE PART OF THAT CONTINUING EFFORT AND DOES NOT PORTEND ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE PHILIPPINES' GLOBAL OUTLOOK. GHIANG'S ASSERTION AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE GOP

AND SRV HOLD IDENTICAL VIEWS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN
SEA WAS AN OBVIOUS EXAGGERATION AND IS BELIED, FOR EXAMPLE,
BY THE FACT THAT THE GOP IS NOT SEEKING THE REMOVAL OF U.S.
BASES. THE GOP STILL VIEWS THE SRV WITH CAUTION, AWARE OF
THE LARGE STOCKPILE OF WEAPONS IN VIETNAM AND THE POTENTIAL FOR
CONFLICT OVER THE SPRATLY ISLANDS. THE SRV DELEGATION
APPEARED, TO SOME EXTENT, TO BE SENSITIVE TO GOP FEARS;
WHILE STATING THEY SUPPORTED THE PHILIPPINES PEOPLE'S EFFORTS
TO REMOVE U.S. BASES, THEY THEMSELVES DID NOT CALL FOR THE
REMOVAL OF THESE FACILITIES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANILA00611
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780017-1267
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780172/aaaacivg.tel
Line Count: 235
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 55358be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3788577
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SRV AND GOP SIGN ECONOMIC TREATIES AND PLEDGE TO ESCHEW FORCE
TAGS: PDIP, ETRD, VM, RP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/55358be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014